

Borough



of Nelson.



Medical Officer's

Report

For 1900.

NELSON:

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NELSON,

18th JANUARY, 1901.

To the Chairman and Members of the Health Committee.

GENTLEMEN,

I have the honour of presenting you my Annual Report on the health and sanitary condition of the Borough. I shall first give you the formal record of the births and deaths which occurred during the year. I find 793 births (392 males 401 females) were registered, which gives an annual birth-rate 22·6 per 1,000 of the population. The deaths registered including premature births (25) and inquest cases (14) numbered 430 (214 males 216 females) which gives an annual death-rate of 12·2 per 1,000. If we deduct the premature births and inquest cases we reduce the rate to 11·1

The deaths of children under one year including premature births totalled 101, which gives a death-rate of 12·7 per cent. calculated on the number born during the year; excluding premature births, 9·5.

The following epitomises the ages at which death occurred :—

Deaths under 1 year	101	} 152 deaths under 5 years.
„ of 1 year and under 5 years ...	51	
„ of 5 years „ 15 „ ...	25	} 278 deaths over 5 years.
„ of 15 „ „ 25 „ ...	27	
„ of 25 „ „ 65 „ ...	147	
„ of 65 years and over	79	

I enclose a detailed list of the causes of death and the ages at which they died.

Under the "Notification of Infectious Diseases Act" there have been reported 291 cases of Scarlet Fever, 27 Enteric, 1 Continued Fever, 16, Diphtheria, 1 Membranous Croup and 30 Erysipelas. In these cases the Health Superintendent took the necessary steps to prevent their spread, notifying the parents and School Authorities, thus prohibiting children from infected houses attending School, supplying disinfectants, attending to any deficient ashpit or drain, &c. In Enteric cases buckets with disinfectants for the reception of the excreta were supplied and regularly removed to the Refuse Destructor. House fumigation was carried out by the use of Sulphur di Oxide. Although we have had so many cases of Scarlet Fever (which I may here say was of a mild type) it never assumed an epidemic form, but was with us more or less during the whole year, 5, 6, and as high as 10 cases in a week. In a number of instances three or four occurred in the same house.

In the 1st quarter we had an epidemic of Influenza with cold east winds, a great number of chest affections being the result. 30 deaths from Bronchitis, 14 from Pneumonia and 2 from Influenza being registered. The death rate for the Quarter was 15.7.

The 2nd quarter was a fairly healthy one, the death-rate having dropped to 13.1.

On the 22nd April I had a communication from the Medical Officer of Health, Liverpool, informing me that one of our residents had been exposed to the infection of Small-pox. On enquiries we found he had been staying in Liverpool with his brother, who after he left developed Small-pox. He with two others who occupied the same room and the landlady were as soon as possible taken to Catlow Hospital and carefully isolated. In a fortnight they were able to return home, no outbreak having occurred.

During this quarter satisfactory arrangements were made between the Corporation and the Brierfield District Council over the drainage of the proposed New Infectious Hospital. The plans of the proposed Hospital are now in course of preparation for presentation to the Local Government Board, borrowing powers for the Site having already been granted.

The 3rd quarter has been a very healthy one, the death rate dropping to the low figure of 9·4.

I had a communication from the Local Government Board with an Order dated 19th September, for Bubonic Plague to be added to the list of Notifiable Cases under the Notification of Infectious Diseases Act. So far no cases have been reported.

I may here say we had a plentiful supply of good water all the summer.

The 4th quarter has also been a healthy one, the death-rate although a little higher 10·7, being very good for the winter quarter.

You, Mr. Chairman, had I am sure a very pleasing duty to perform on the 3rd December, when in the presence of all the Members of the Corporation, Officials and other gentlemen, you opened the New Refuse Destructor, one of the most modern in type and which Mr. Priestley informs me is working most satisfactorily. The old destructor being utterly inadequate to get through the work required, it had become absolutely necessary to have a larger, and you and your committee spent a great amount of time and labour in visiting and examining those recently adopted in other towns before deciding on the one just opened, which as one of the speakers at the opening declared was *second to none* in the country.

I am very pleased to say we shall also soon have a Steam Disinfector, a want which has been long felt.

During the last two months there has been considerable excitement in the country, especially in Manchester and Salford, over the "Beer Scare," but I am pleased to say we got off well here. In September and October there were an abnormal number of cases of Alcoholic Neuritis, but no deaths.

Dr. Sergeant, County Medical Officer of Health, in November sent me an enquiry as to the number of cases of Arsenical Poisoning through drinking beer. I had previously called a meeting of the Medical men in Nelson, Brierfield and Barrowford, to ascertain what number of cases of Neuritis had come under their notice. They had nearly all had a considerable

number of cases of Alcoholic Neuritis, but none had suspected Arsenical Poisoning.

Arsenic was found in some of the beers, and the cause seems to be pretty well traced, the matter is still *sub judice* and will be well thrashed out in the Law Courts, doubtless with beneficial results.

I have also had an enquiry from Dr. Sergeant as to the number of deaths from Alcoholic Neuritis, Peripheral Neuritis, Multiple Neuritis and Alcoholism for the last six months of 1899 and 1900, and am pleased to say I have been able to answer his enquiry in the negative.

During the last quarter we have had an epidemic of Parotitis (Mumps), which has had a considerable effect on the School Attendance but no deaths have been recorded.

The Health Superintendent (Mr. Priestley) has kindly condensed for me some of the work of his department.

NUISANCES.—282 Complaints of Nuisances have been received and investigated, abatement of which has in most cases been secured by giving intimation to the parties responsible, but 30 Statutory Notices have been served on instructions from the Committee dealing with the following:—

- 21 Defective Drains
- 7 Ashpits requiring Covers or Doors
- 3 Mills to provide New W.C's.
- 5 Water Closets blocked
- 4 Middens to be covered
- 2 Accumulations of Manure
- 2 Smoke Nuisances
- 1 Defective Water Supply
- 1 Keeping Animals
- 1 Stagnant Water

UNSOUND MEAT.—248 lbs. of Haddock and 12 Rabbits were condemned as unfit for food, but no other cases of unsound meat, fruit or vegetables were reported.

LEGAL PROCEEDINGS.—Four persons were summoned for River Pollution, two were fined 10/- including costs, and the other two 7/6.

SLAUGHTER HOUSES.—There are 19 Private Slaughter-Houses in the Borough which have been kept in a fairly good condition. No new ones licensed during the year.

LODGING HOUSE.—The Common Lodging House at Clough Bottom continues to be well conducted. No complaints during the year.

OFFENSIVE TRADES.—No new offensive trade established during the year. One application made but refused.

SCAVENGING AND CLEANSING.—Scavenging and Cleansing are very efficiently carried out by the Corporation Staff.

The Borough Engineer (Mr. Ball) informs me that during the year plans have been approved for the erection of 141 houses, 30 workshops, 1 church, 1 chapel, 1 school, 1 bank, and 1 club. The number of empty houses being about the same as last year, the population may be said to have increased about 650.

Private Street Works have been executed at a cost of £5,000 in 41 streets.

Just before Christmas the new roadway through Bradley known as the Bradley Improvement was completed, this being one of the most important improvements yet carried out in Nelson, and it is hoped to still further increase that improvement by the execution of a roadway alongside the river from Bradley Road to Leeds Road.

I think I may say, Mr. Chairman and Gentlemen, this is one of the most favourable reports I have had the honour of presenting you.

I remain,

Your obedient servant,

A. P. MILLAR, M.D., &c.

Causes of Death in Nelson at different ages, for the year ending December 31st, 1900.

Cause of Death.	Ages at Death.		SEXES.																	
	Under — 1		Under — 5		Total under 5		' 5 and under 15		15 and under 25.		25 and under 65		65 and over.		Total of 5 years and Upwards.					
	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.
Influenza .....	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	2	1	..	..	..	..
Inquest Cases .....	..	2	..	..	..	3	..	..	..	..	1	..	..	..	9	1	..	..	..	..
Smallpox .....	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	7	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Measles .....	..	1	..	..	..	2	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Scarletina .....	..	..	7	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	3
Diphtheria.....	..	1	..	..	..	2	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Croup .....	..	1	2	..	..	2	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Whooping Cough .....	..	2	5	..	..	2	..	1	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	1
Typhus Fever .....	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Typhoid Fever .....	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	1
Fever .....	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Diarrhoea	1	..	1	..	..	2	..	..	..	..	1	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Rheumatic Fever.....	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Erysipelas .....	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Pyæmia .....	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Puerperal Fever .....	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Phthisis .....	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Pneumonia	3	4	4	3	7	7	..	3	3	6	8	10	..	..	..	1	..	..	..	..
Pleurisy .....	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Bronchitis	3	6	3	..	6	6	..	1	1	16	15	..	11	8	2	..	27	25	..	..
Heart Disease .....	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	7	21	..	2	..	..	11	34	..	..	..
Injuries .....	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Old Age .....	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Brain Disease	2	3	..	..	..	6	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	9	5	..	5	..	..
Infantile Complaints	21	19	1	3	3	24	..	2	..	6	2	..	5	7	12	12	..	12	..	..
Other Diseases.....	5	2	4	6	9	8	3	..	3	..	17	19	8	8	31	8	..	..	..	..
Premature Births.....	14	11	..	..	14	11	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
TOTAL	49	52	30	21	79	73	11	14	13	14	74	73	37	42	135	143	..	..	..	..